

THE JERUSALEM POST

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Monday, April 1, 1951
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THE WEEK IN THE KNESSET

House Votes for Fifteen Hours

THIS is more like gymnastics than a Knesset session," remarked one of the members during the final voting on the budget on Wednesday.

For hours on end, the members had been waving their hands up and down, as they sat through the long meeting on Wednesday. The Knesset started the final voting on the budget at 8.30 a.m. and continued almost without interruption until late at night. This was the only way they could meet the March 31 deadline when the previous budget would expire.

That work under these circumstances cannot be very thorough, was illustrated by the puzzled query of the Minister of Education who wanted to know if he were supposed to follow the law binding him to provide schooling for every child in the country, or to keep to his budget which would not allow him to do so. He did not receive a satisfactory answer. Of course, the question should have been raised before the final reading, as there was a silly any room for major changes at the last minute.

Indeed, Mr. Kaplan pointed out during the final debate, that major changes in any one item would have upset the whole structure of the budget. The rushed proceedings proved that work on the budget needs more careful preparation by the government as well as by members. The presentation of an alternative budget by Mapai at the last moment only served as a demonstration.

Large Backlog
Also of only token value were the various proposals which came up on Tuesday, when the House started work on the big backlog of private members' business which had accumulated in the course of months. This backlog of work was partly responsible for the odd fact that some of the proposals were added to the budget debate.

After the budget discussion and the announcement of the Minister of Finance on measures to be taken against inflation, it was certainly strange to hear a motion to discuss the position of the black market, and a second one to the Ministry of Interior.

One of the most interesting of the recent changes in the structure of the Government has been the transfer of the Personnel Division from the Treasury to the Prime Minister's Office, considering the lack of interest displayed in staff administration by the Minister of Finance and his Director General—overburdened with other matters—the change is all to the good. Even now, the Treasury is a major bottleneck for many of the other Ministries. It takes months before a newly appointed civil servant can get his first salary.

The control of the civil service from the Prime Minister's Office is somewhat of a novelty. But even in some other countries opinion is veering away from Treasury control, with its narrow financial outlook. In Israel, the former position was anomalous, with instructions emanating from both the Treasury and the Prime Minister's Office. This has now been changed. All general circulars emanate from the Prime Minister's Office, which has added to the responsibilities on the shoulders of Mr. Sharaf as the Secretary to the Government.

The enforcement of discipline by the Personnel Division has not yet been satisfactorily arranged as Ministers expect to be masters in their own houses. But training has developed very satisfactorily, and the new central Government residential training school is already a great success. The appointment is welcomed of Dr. Ertan as head of the Civil Service Examination Board, which is now getting into its stride and introducing a measure of order into the appointment and promotion of officials.

13 MEN IN ANDER
BUNDO, ABER, Saturday (Continued). — An explosion in an Andes sulphur mine in Western Argentina yesterday is believed to have cost 13 lives.

MUSICAL DIARY
WITH the celebrated duo piano team of Vronsky and Babin as soloists, the Kol Israel Orchestra, under the direction of Karel Salomon, presented a festive concert at the Edison Hall on Tuesday night. The concert opened with Haydn's "London" Symphony No. 104.

The perfect unanimity and precision of the duo pianists were remarkable in Mozart's Concerto No. 10 in E Flat Major for two pianos. They followed this with a moving performance of Bach's Introduction and Air, and his Sonata No. 3 in C Major for Two Pianos. Debussy's tone poem "En blanc et noir" was played charmingly with the vivid contrasts between martial music in the opening bars, and the impressionistic depiction in the closing piece. The duo pianists finished with an electrifying performance of Beethoven's "Polovetsian Dances," which brought the audience to their feet, clamouring for encores.

Wagner for Export
The Long-playing Record Catalogue, published by W. Schwann in New York, contains the following surprising item:
WAGNER—Tristan: Love Duet
Riklin, Israel
State Sym. 10"
REM LP-3
Does this mean that the music of Wagner — up till now prohibited in this country — is now being produced for export only? And who is the mysterious conductor called Riklin?
FRANCO
Piano Recital
Vera Lengyel made her Tel Aviv debut at the Museum Hall on Tuesday. The

return to some sort of free trade.

The private bill for the equality of women, introduced by Mrs. Rahel Kagan, received concentrated attention. This bill promises revolutionary changes in the status of women in this country. That there is need for the changes has been admitted by the Prime Minister who has pledged himself to introduce a bill on the equality of women.

When the Minister of Justice asked Mrs. Kagan to wait with her bill until the government had finished preparing their own draft, he was asked to set a definite date for the tabling.

Clarifying Procedure

A point which needs clarification is the procedure of proposals for private members' bills. The way to introduce a private bill into the House is to put it among the proposals for the agenda. In the House of Commons a ballot is taken at the beginning of each session to decide on the precedence of private members' bills, but in the Knesset it is decided whether or not the bill is to be discussed at all.

In this way, if a proposal for the discussion of a bill is

voted down, the bill cannot be introduced at all. This arrangement could enable part of the members to keep a bill which does not suit them from coming up for discussion at all. This is certainly not the intention when private members' bills are to be encouraged.

Squabbles Waste Time

When questioned on the state of the election bill, the deputy Speaker, Mr. Nir, said in desperation, "What can I do, if the committee members simply refuse to sit six days a week?" The committee which was to have completed the discussion of the bill within a fortnight will apparently not even be ready next week. Voting on the Election Bill may thus have to be postponed until after the recess, which will be in May. Deliberations are held up by squabbles on minor issues.

The government, growing impatient, has therefore announced that a bill fixing July 10 as election day, will be tabled in the House this week. This would force all parties to prepare for their election campaigns in time. Although the Knesset plods along reasonably well, and although the voting on the budget appeared to have almost revived the previous coalition, the feeling of irregularity must increase if elections are delayed any longer.

Readers' Letters

THE "PLIGHT OF DAN"

To the Editor of THE POST
Sir, — On March 19 a "Dan" advertisement appeared in your publication showing the comparatively small increase in fares during the past 12 years. The fare (5 pruta) on sections and short lines in 1939, was omitted. This makes a 300 per cent rise in bus fares since 1939.

However, in order to give the public a full picture of the "plight of Dan," the cooperative should also have indicated the rise of the monthly salaries including overtime pay and bonuses to their members from 1939 to 1951, as well as the rise in the value of a Dr. share, capital bonuses, land allocations and other benefits given to members.

No one can deny that a "Dan" have to tackle a very complicated and difficult task and that criticism directed against them is sometimes exaggerated. But, no one will deny that there is great dissatisfaction with the service they give.

If "Dan" are not satisfied with their present situation, the logical conclusion should be the nationalization of Transport Cooperatives.

Yours, etc.
C. HERZBERG
Tel Aviv, March 20.

FARMERS' REQUEST

To the Editor of THE POST
Sir, — In Jerusalem and its surrounding corridor settlements there are hundreds of farmers who raise chickens and grow vegetables. Yet there is not a single official of the Ministry of Agriculture's small farming section available in the town to arrange the necessary formalities involved in the distribution of seeds, fenders etc. These farmers must apply to the Jaffa office in person, which means a waste of time and travelling expenses. If they must write which means waiting for weeks for a reply. Is it too much to ask that in Jerusalem an official be made available for them?
Yours, etc.
G. WEIGERT
Jerusalem.

Points From Letters

DANGEROUS PLAY. — Shooting with toy pistols during the Purim holidays is overdue by the children who are not content with using them only in the streets but insist on shooting them off in the cinema, causing disturbance and panic. One should also mention that the sparks from these bullets are liable to cause injury. Something should be done to prohibit their use.
Annoyed Soldier
Jerusalem, March 22

REPORTED MISSING. — The Missing Persons Bureau of the Jewish Agency is doing an excellent job in rendering an important public service. During the course of two months, they located the members of my family who are dispersed in two different countries.
Jerusalem, March 22, Beulah Stein

ART-HOUSE. — Hundreds of people must like myself have heard with pleasure and envy about the new road safety measure in Haifa, to erect busts. How long will it take the Tel Aviv Municipality to learn that the same must be done in this city?
Tel Aviv, March 18, Shana Mayer

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IMPRESSIONS OF A SCOT IN ENGLAND

Paradox of the Festival of Britain

By WILFRED TAYLOR

This is the second of a series of reciprocal articles arranged by the editorial staff of the "Denver Post" in the U.S. A world-wide selection of English language newspapers has been invited to exchange articles concerned with the problems of their particular countries.

Wilfred Taylor who writes from Edinburgh, is author of the "Daily Scotman."

EDINBURGH. — Of all the paradoxes that make life so perplexing, or so beguiling, according to one's temperament, in this Welfare Island, perhaps the most astonishing is the Festival of Britain. Preparations for this mammoth show piece steadily advance as if the only thing that was truly certain and predictable in a world suffering from acute muscular rheumatism was that the British are going to give a great, big jolly party for their friends from overseas and, incidentally, for themselves.

To the distant observer this may look like a case of national schizophrenia — a gigantic refusal to face realities. The same idea has occurred to quite a number of Britons. There has been, in certain quarters, a suspicion that the festival has been promoted by a nervous administration to divert the minds of a troubled populace from its grievous tribulations.

Certain citizens of disenchanted outlook have also wondered where the money to pay for the festival is to come from.

Morrison's Baby

The festival, however, is probably seen best as further proof of that mixture of the phlegmatic and the sanguine which is so conspicuously British. If, as a whole, we are not overly excited about the festival, it is probably making more perceptible impact on us than the atomic bomb, civil defence, or the possibility of a third war. That is not to say that we are not conscious of our position of fearful exposure if events turn in a dire direction. The fact is that after eleven years of continuous crisis, sacrifice, tension, and cheated hopes our capacity for feeling alarm in the grand manner is rather saturated. If things come to the worst we shall cheerfully and willingly accept the inevitable

but meanwhile there is the festival to be getting on with.

In a special sense the festival is Mr. Herbert Morrison's baby and, according to some prophets, there is no chance of the present government quitting office until the festival is launched.

A prime minister, backed by a skin-tight party discipline, need not concern himself overmuch with popular expostulation. As a result of a sequence of administrative blunders, ranging from African ground-nuts to Gambia eggs, the Labour government's prestige has sharply declined even among the common men, whose happiness it has pledged itself to pursue. The latest "Daily Express" public opinion poll shows that the Conservatives are now leading Labour by 121 per cent.

The 445 questions — or, equivalent, in weary sterling — is: How long can the government survive? The recent string of divisions has shown that by relying on the absolute fidelity of his followers to the party line, Mr. Attlee can, technically and in the filmsiest of margins, retain the confidence of the House. Short of a collapse through sheer nervous strain, or of a sudden decision to test the feelings of the nation on the government's part, the only foreseeable way in which the Conservatives could return to power would be by means of a series of successful by-elections.

Foreign Policy Confusion

In the domain of foreign affairs public sentiment is undoubtedly bemused. Partial responsibility for this sense of confusion must rest on the tired shoulders of Mr. Ernest Bevin, who, like Mr. Dean Acheson, (although for different reasons) had been a target for press criticism. Mr. Bevin has at last overcome his party's congenial disinclination to lay down the burden.

One of the unfortunate effects of events in Korea is that left-wing elements in the Socialist party have been sharply assailing U.S. foreign policy. It would be tedious if it were not so funny to listen to charges that the U.S. are "occupying" the countries of western Europe in the same way that the Soviets are occupying the satellite countries.

Ludicrous and reckless though such contentions are, they do express the convictions of that group of intellectual left-wingers who are constitutionally unable to forgive the United States for being the United States. They appear to suffer from that kind of xenophobia which makes friends somehow more unpalatable than foes.

There was considerable relief in Britain when, after some unaccountable delay, the number of British and Dominion men serving in the Far East was made public in Washington. This relief, however, was immediately offset by Mr. Attlee's announcement that the supreme naval commander in the Atlantic was to be an American sailor. To appreciate the nationwide burst of anger provoked by the disclosure Americans ought to bear in mind two facts.

Navy Venerated
The first is that the royal navy, with its superb traditions, occupies a place of affection, amounting almost to veneration, in the hearts of the British.

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The second factor is that Mr. Attlee made the announcement in an astonishingly casual way. He seemed genuinely surprised to find out how much we all loved the navy.

The first sea lord, Admiral Lord Fraser, has placed the appointment in perspective by stating that he considers Admiral Fechele's appointment is a sensible one while also blunty adding that he was delighted to see how deeply we all felt about our bluejackets.

Meanwhile everyone here is glad to have General Eisenhower back, with the exception of our handful of buccolic Communists. Everyone here looks on "Be" as practically an Englishman, anyway, except the Scots who have gone as far as they can to make him a clansman.

Scottish Socialism

Whether Socialism is a good or a bad thing Scots, on the whole, tend to think that the kind of Socialism we have been enjoying for the past six years, presses peculiarly heavily north of the fifty-fifth parallel. The smothering impact of long range bureaucratic control from London has undoubtedly contributed more than any other single factor to the movement in favour of home rule which has sprung up in Scotland, and which has been so dramatically symbolized by the covenant.

Americans, despite their own experience of the blessings of home rule, may find it difficult to understand why, at this of all times, almost two million Scots should have put their signatures to a document pressing for national autonomy. That is not surprising, for to a certain extent, it puzzles Scotsmen too. The situation is far too complex for simple clarification and is shot through with historical, psychological, cultural and economic issues. In essence it all boils down to the Scot's stubborn and independent yearning to mind his own business in his own way.

It is important not to identify this widely diffused movement with the Scottish National party which is tiny in numbers and has not a very impressive political record. And it is equally important not to regard the covenant as an instrument directed against England. As yet the covenant

has been more broadly supported on sentimental than on philosophical grounds. Though speaking a majority of the Scots who have signed the covenant want to see their country getting approximately the same grip over its domestic affairs as the state of Colorado has over its domestic affairs.

Home Rule

Scotland, of course, is a notably contentious land and the home rule movement has not been lacking in feud and schism. When its leader, Dr. John McCormick — recently elected Lord Rector of Glasgow University where he studied with Hector McNeill, now Secretary of State for Scotland — paid his respects to his namesake Colonel McCormick of Chicago, during the summer, he alienated some support, including that of Eric Linklater, the Scottish author, who didn't see why a Scottish home ruler should canvas sympathy in the state of Illinois.

The mystery of the location of the Stone of Destiny is still unsolved despite the rather sheepish efforts of the detectives to follow up clues, most of which turn out to be hoaxes. Although a number of Scots confessed to feelings of humiliation over the removal of the stone from Westminster Abbey, there is no pronounced trend for Scots to don sackcloth and ashes. Most of us looked at the episode not contributing a note of cheerfulness to a gloomy world.

Our sentiments may perhaps be summed up in the words of an old landlady in Aberdeen who, on meeting the professor of psychology in the university there, asked him if he didn't think the removal of the stone was "a tairbed sacrilegious crime." The professor replied that he, on the whole, took a favourable view of the incident. "My but I'm right glad to hear ye say it," said the old lady. "That's my opinion too, professor, but I was feared to say it."

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